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ABSTRACT

Guidelines are presented for developing a career counseling instrument which may be used to identify and select students who can best benefit from a particular vocational program. Instrument construction takes approximately two hours and entails selecting appropriate criteria for student evaluation (such as grades, attendance, attitude, mental level, and program interest) and assigning point values to each one. The student is rated on a scale for each of the criteria, resulting in the attainment of points for each scale as well as a total point count for the instrument. Data for the instrument is obtained from student records and teacher evaluation. Sample forms are included. (Author/RG)

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DEVELOPING CAREER COUNSELING INSTRUMENTS

A GUIDANCE HANDBOOK

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INTRODUCTION

The problem of objective career counseling for occupational programs has troubled teachers, counselors, and administrators alike. Too often, in spite of the numerous criteria used, the procedures are not truly objective or not agreeable to either the instructor, the guidance personnel, or perhaps the parents.

Counselors have a genuine problem in identifying the students who will most benefit from a particular program and be most successful in accomplishing the program's objectives. For example, it is not possible nor is it desirable to select just the best students (academically speaking) among those interested in a particular program, for these are not always the students who will benefit the most from or fit best into that particular program. In the case of a cooperative program such as Distributive Education, care has to be taken that students do not express false interest in enrolling simply to gain the monetary advantages. Even after prescreening a tentative list of possible candidates, a program still needs an identification tool--one that is simple and easy to apply, yet one which contains all pertinent data. Counseling criteria, if well chosen, can provide a uniform selection method in addition to serving as an effective instrument upon which to help

career counsel students.

This booklet will attempt to define and explain one such career counseling method which may be used to determine and select those students who can best benefit from a particular program from the total group of students who have expressed a desire to enroll in that program. Even though students have been pre-screened from the total student body, the number of students may still have to be further reduced because of local or state limits on maximum class enrollments, facilities, number of teachers, and the like.

The use of the student career counseling/selection instrument as a counseling tool is an attempt to objectively record and relate all those variables that guidance personnel normally evaluate as they interview students in such a manner that these criteria or qualities could be reliably rated for student evaluation, selection, and career counseling. The reliability would be achieved by always applying the same set of criteria, with the same weight, for all students with equal qualifications per criteria each time the instrument is applied.

DIRECTIONS

The construction of a career counseling instrument

will take approximately two hours. After you have read each section, a ** will appear; turn to the last page of this booklet and proceed with the construction of an instrument, utilizing the information presented. Select a vocational program with which you are most familiar and construct a counseling instrument for that program. Before proceeding any further, turn to page 11 and study the sample carefully.

INSTRUMENT CONSTRUCTION

I. DETERMINING CRITERIA

1. The first task to be completed is to make a list of all criteria by which the students are going to be counseled and selected. Generally, about eight to ten different criteria are used. Such criteria might include:

1. Grades
2. Attendance
3. Attitude
4. Responsibility
5. Ability to Work With Others
6. Employability
7. Mechanical Reasoning
8. Language Usage
9. Manual Dexterity
10. Mental Level
11. Instructor Recommendation
12. Program Interest
13. Reading Scores
14. Spatial Scores
15. Typing Speed
16. Math Grades

17.	English Grades	20.	Personal Hygiene
18.	Quality of Work	21.	Neatness
19.	Numerical Ability	22.	Counselor Recommendation

2. Certain programs call for specific abilities which should be added to that program's particular instrument--for example, manual dexterity for Food Service and ability to work with others for Building Trades. All data calling for particular aptitudes or abilities, e.g., manual dexterity, reading comprehension, or abstract reasoning, can be obtained from the General Aptitude Test Battery (GATB), Differential Aptitude Test (DAT), or other standardized tests. All criteria selected must be available in a student's record or "collectable" from another source. ** ** (Turn to page 13 and enter the criteria.)

3. Where applicable, a particular program might list "recommended" courses. Selection of these subjects depends upon the particular program for which students are being considered. For example, a student being considered for Child Care may receive extra points for each year of general science or art, while a student interested

in Food Service would receive extra points for each year of general homemaking. This practice enhances the selection of such students without the restrictive effect of "required" subjects. ** (Turn to page 13 and enter recommended courses, if any.)

4. Some of the rating criteria such as responsibility, attitude, or neatness, due to their subjective nature, require the use of a supplementary rating sheet. (A sample is included on page 12 for your examination.) Each student should be given enough supplementary rating sheets so that as many teachers as are familiar with that student can rate him. Generally, five supplementary rating sheets per student is best. On this supplementary rating sheet, teachers, counselors, and other professionals are asked to rate on a scale certain personal characteristics such as ability to work well with others, responsibility, health, and neatness. These recommendations are then averaged for each particular criterion and a consensus rating entered on the final instrument. ** (Turn to the <u>supplementary rating sheet</u> on page 12 and pencil in any changes you

might have in order to rate the subjective criteria you have on your counseling instrument.)

II. ASSIGNING POINT VALUES

5. Point values or relative weighted importance should be assigned to each criterion as the next step in developing an instrument (for example: Grades, 10 points; Attitude, 15 points; Attendance, 15 points, etc.). The total number of points assigned to any instrument is not too important as long as the relative value of each criterion has been critically considered and carefully selected. For career counseling purposes, it is most helpful if all program instruments have the same total number of possible points. Since the same student may be interested in two programs, the scores obtained on the two instruments can be judged in terms of each other. ** ** (Turn to page 13 and assign point values to the criteria.)

CONSTRUCTION OF THE INSTRUMENT IN DESCRIPTIVE TERMS

III. NUMERATOR AND DENOMINATOR SCALES

6. Once the criteria and weighted values are established, the next step in developing a counseling instrument is to break down the criteria into

their descriptive terms (times absent, age, percentiles, stanines, or any other form), but the construction still remains the same. The denominators are usually linear, numbered consecutively upward or downward depending on the item and the desired values.

Figure 1 shows the construction of a scale for Attendance in which the denominators follow the usual linear pattern.

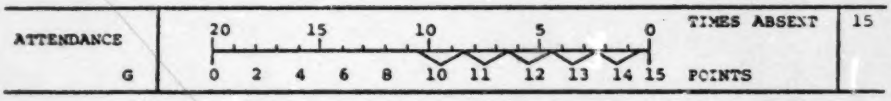

Figure 1

The more often a student has missed school, the less credit (points) he receives for this particular criterion rating. For perfect attendance, he receives the maximum allotment of points, in this case fifteen (15). The numbers of the numerator scale and the denominator scale increase and decrease consecutively and are therefore linear in nature.

7. However, in some cases these scales will not be the normal linear vs linear (numerator and denominator increasing or descreasing in a constant relationship). Figure 2 shows the construction of a scale for the Grades criteria.

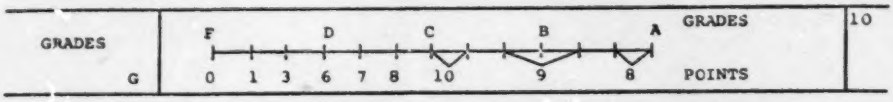

Figure 2

In this example, the grades are arranged in their normal order on the top scale. The grades may be in letters or points, depending on the method used to record the student's total grade average. Note that on the bottom scale the progress begins at 0 points for an "F" and 10 points for a "C". Therefore, the point values may be staggered, concentrating the greatest value at the grade deemed most important for that particular program.

8. Another example of point staggering is shown in Figure 3, for the Mental Level.

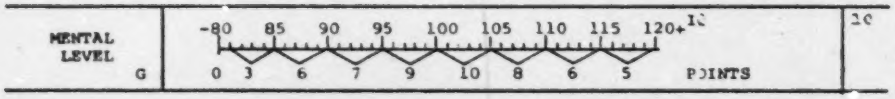

Figure 3

In this example, the scale has an assigned value of 10 points; but it is constructed so that the intervals on the lower scale are smallest and reach the highest point value toward selection between the 100-105 I.Q. level on the top scale. In other words, the students scoring in the 100 to 105 I.Q. range are considered to be those most likely to be successful in this particular program. This implies that those students scoring above 105 (as in the case of the "A" student) could possibly become bored, while those students with decreasing scores below 100 would find the work increasingly difficult and may be counseled into another career pattern by guidance personnel. ** ** (Turn to page 13 and complete construction of the instrument. If you encounter

any difficulty, turn to the appropriate section and study the examples in Figures 1, 2, and 3 or the sample career counseling instrument on page 11.)

SCORING
G - GUIDANCE
T - TEACHER

FOOD SERVICE

STUDENT: _____

CRITERIA	SCALES		POINTS
GRADES	F D C B A	GRADES	10
G	0 1 3 6 7 8 10 9 8	POINTS	
ATTITUDE	POOR FAIR GOOD VERY GOOD	RATING AVERAGE	15
G/T	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15	POINTS	
ATTENDANCE	20 15 10 5 0	TIMES ABSENT	15
G	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15	POINTS	
MENTAL LEVEL	-80 85 90 95 100 105 110 115 120+	IQ	10
G	0 3 6 7 9 10 8 6 5	POINTS	
READING COMPREHENSION	0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100	PERCENTILE	10
G	0 1 2 6 7 8 9 10	POINTS	
ABSTRACT REASONING	0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100	PERCENTILE	10
G	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	POINTS	
RESPONSI-BILITY	0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100	PERCENT AVERAGE	15
G/T	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15	POINTS	
ABILITY TO WORK WELL WITH OTHERS	0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100	PERCENT AVERAGE	15
G/T	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15	POINTS	
MANUAL DEXTERITY	0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100	PERCENTILE	20
G	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 9 11 13 15 17 18 19 20	POINTS	
INTEREST IN FOOD SERVICE	LITTLE SOME CONSIDERABLE	O.V.I.S. SCORE ON (001-010-110-112)	10
G/T	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10		
NEATNESS	0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100	PERCENT AVERAGE	10
G/T	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	POINTS	
HEALTH	0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100	PERCENT AVERAGE	10
G/T	0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	POINTS	
ADD FIVE POINTS FOR EACH OF THESE COURSES IN WHICH THE STUDENT RECEIVED "C" OR ABOVE. (EACH YEAR OF HOMEMAKING) - 10 POINTS MAXIMUM			10
COMMENTS	MUST HAVE NEGATIVE X-RAY	TOTAL	100

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Teacher's Recommendation Form

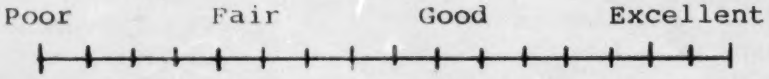
Student Name _____

Recommending Teacher _____

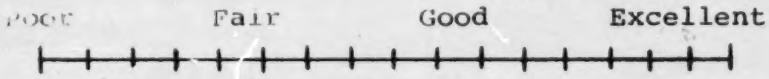
Simply stated, what we want is your opinion of the student reduced to a numerical equivalent. Ideally, we desire a person who applies himself diligently to his work, relates well to his classmates and teachers, and has a pleasing personality.

Please check the following descriptions in order to indicate your evaluation of the student. Note the smaller divisions in some areas to help in making finer assessments.

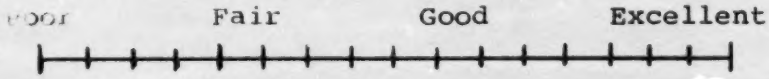
1. Instructor Recommendation -



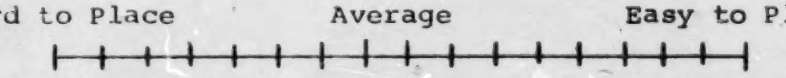
2. Coun[illegible] Recommendation -



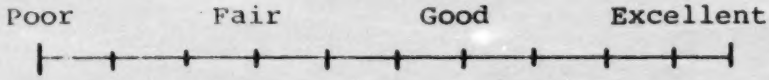
3. Attitude - general overall feelings toward school, teachers, peers....



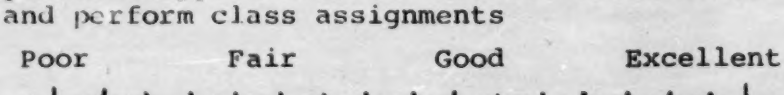
4. Employability - prompt, attendance regular, dresses appropriately for occasion



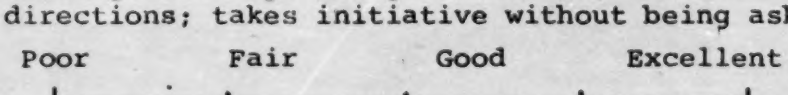
5. Ability to Get Along With Others - cooperative and friendly, can take orders as well as give them



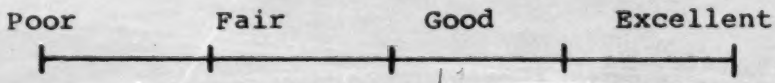
6. Personal Hygiene - free from communicable disease, mentally sound, neat and clean personal appearance, is able to attend school regularly and perform class assignments



7. Responsibility - willing to accept delegated duties; follows directions; takes initiative without being asked



8. Neatness - neatness, accuracy, follows assignments or guidelines, etc.



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Rating Code:
G = Guidance
I = Instructor (THIS PROGRAM)
T = Teacher (ALL OTHER PROGRAMS)

Name_____

CRITERIA	SCALE	POINTS
	Points	
	Points	
	Points	
	Points	
	Points	
	Points	
	Points	
	Points	
	Points	
	Points	

RECOMMENDED COURSES

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